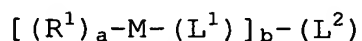


We Claim:

1. A retardation film comprising:

a support;

an optically anisotropic layer formed of a compound
5 represented by the following formula (I):



wherein R^1 represents an alkyl group having 1 to 20 carbon
atoms, and at least one $-CH_2-$ group in said alkyl group may
be substituted by $-O-$, $-S-$, $-C(=O)-$, $-N(R^2)-$, $-CH=CH-$ or
10 $-C\equiv C-$ but $-O-$ and $-O-$ are not directly bonded in said alkyl
group;

R^2 represents a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group
having 1 to 5 carbon atoms;

M represents a group comprising at least three
15 aromatic rings;

L^1 represents a single bond or a divalent alkylene
group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and at least one
 $-CH_2-$ group in said alkylene group may be substituted
by $-O-$, $-S-$, $-C(=O)-$ or $-N(R^2)-$ but $-O-$ and $-O-$ are not
20 directly bonded in the alkylene group;

L^2 represents a cyclic, alkene or alkyne group having
a valence of b;

a represents the number of $R^1(s)$ substituted on M;
and

25 b represents an integer of 2 to 6.

2. The retardation film as claimed in claim 1, wherein in the compound represented by formula (I), the plurality of Ms are not conjugated with each other by a multiple bond.

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3. The retardation film as claimed in claim 1, wherein M in formula (I) is a group comprising a triphenylene ring.

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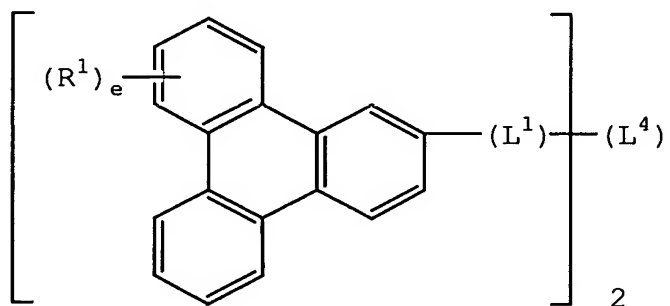
4. The retardation film as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compound represented by formula (I) exhibits liquid crystallinity.

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5. The retardation film as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compound represented by formula (I) is a liquid crystalline compound comprising a polymerizable group.

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6. The retardation film as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compound represented by formula (I) is a compound represented by formula (II):



wherein R^1 and L^1 each has the same meaning as in formula (I);

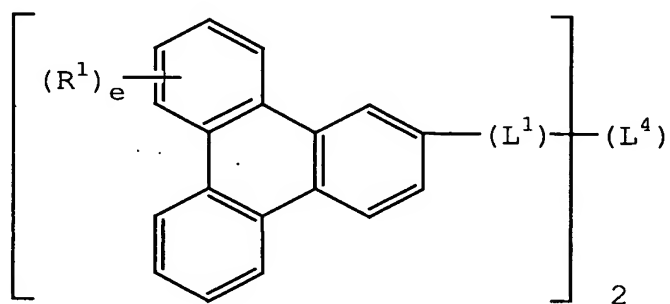
L^4 represents a divalent cyclic, alkene or alkyne group; and

e represents the number of $R^1(s)$ substituted on each of the two triphenylene rings,

provided that the two triphenylene rings bonded through L^1 and L^4 are not conjugated.

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7. A compound represented by the following formula (II):



wherein R^1 represents an alkyl group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and at least one $-CH_2-$ group in said alkyl group may be substituted by $-O-$, $-S-$, $-C(=O)-$, $-N(R^2)-$, $-CH=CH-$ or $-C\equiv C-$ but $-O-$ and $-O-$ are not directly bonded in said alkyl group;

L^1 represents a single bond or a divalent alkylene group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and at least one $-CH_2-$ group in said alkylene group may be substituted

by -O-, -S-, -C(=O)- or -N(R²)- but -O- and -O- are not directly bonded in the alkylene group;

L⁴ represents a divalent cyclic, alkene or alkyne group; and

5 e represents the number of R¹(s) substituted on each of the two triphenylene rings,

provided that the two triphenylene rings bonded through L¹ and L⁴ are not conjugated.

10 8. The compound as claimed in claim 7, wherein the compound represented by formula (II) is a liquid crystalline compound comprising a polymerizable group.

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